



Ogden Standard-Examiner

SERVING NORTHERN UTAH SINCE 1870

Sept. 21, 1970

P.O. BOX 951
OGDEN, UTAH
394-7711

Mr. Ed McLaughlin:

If you wish to use Saturday's "Heber Creeper" editorial Tuesday in your talks with the Utah Road Commission, tell Chairman Clem Church and his colleagues that the project has my unqualified endorsement.

Sincerely,

Murray M. Moler—Associate Editor

Ogden Standard-Examiner

2

OGDEN, UTAH, SATURDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 19, 1970

EDITORIALS

Drive Begins to Save 'Heber Creeper'

There's a campaign under way in Central Utah to save the "Heber Creeper"—the railroad through scenic Provo Canyon—that could bring rich dividends to the entire state.

The tracks used to belong to the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad but they were abandoned a couple of years ago.

The Utah Highway Department, faced with eventually improving the busy road through the canyon, bought the right-of-way, including the ties and track.

The highway authorities plan to let their first bid for realignment and reconstruction next spring, with attention concentrated on the mouth of the canyon near the pioneer power plant at Olmstead.

In preparation, they invited bids for junking of the rails—either as scrap steel or for pulling them up for re-sale on other lines where such track is badly needed.

The bids were opened a month ago and a contract for pulling the rails out was scheduled to be awarded this week.

However, several groups got busy in a last-ditch effort to keep the Provo Canyon railroad, or at least a part of it, in operation as a tourist attraction.

There are several possibilities.

One would be to retain the entire line with the goal of connecting, it eventually, to the Union Pacific from Echo to Park City as a scenic, historic loop route. The Highway Department doesn't like this—it would complicate, tremendously, the construction problems in the mouth of the canyon.

Another alternate would be to keep intact only the portion from Wildwood, near where the Timpanogos Loop Highway intersects with the Provo Canyon

road, to Heber — which includes Deer Creek Reservoir. This, too, could be extended—if patronage warranted — to Wasatch Mountain State Park and over the divide to Park City.

The state doesn't really need the right-of-way from Wildwood to Heber since the new highway will be in another portion of the canyon. Plans called only for use of this roadbed as a fishing trail.

And construction east of Wildwood won't begin for several years.

So the concerned authorities and private groups are now exploring the feasibility of an arrangement that would permit operation of the Heber Creeper again, at least through part of the canyon, on a lease basis.

If it proves successful — and it should — the state will have retained a tremendous asset that will attract railroad-minded visitors from throughout the nation. If it fails, the tracks could still be retrieved for sale.

It would be an irreparable loss to junk the line now when there's a possibility it can again serve the public.

The Wasatch Railway Museum and Foundation Corp. has built up a tremendous inventory of vintage steam-powered locomotives and accessories that it will put into the Provo Canyon venture if proper arrangements can be made.

What a sight that would be!

And, some day, the connection could be made to Ogden via Park City. While we're dreaming, if enough interest is shown and more track can be secured along with proper right-of-way agreements, the historic line from Corinne to our own Promontory Summit could eventually be re-laid.

Ashton

OIL & TRANSPORTATION CO.

D. Green

P. O. Box 67 • HEBER CITY, UTAH 84032

9-21-70

TO: MEMBERS OF SAVE THE HEBER CREEPER COMMITTEE:

Gentlemen, In the interest of time I am inclosing a tentative organization chart that outlines to a degree what we have discussed and what assignments have been given at the previous meeting, together with a proposed agenda for the meeting Monday at noon. I realize that each of you will only get this just prior to the meeting, but I hope that it will be adequate time to allow you to think of our immediate steps and the future so that we will not take so much of our short and valuable time rehashing old issues and points.

Thank you all for your most enthusiastic support and concentration of effort. I firmly believe we are within reach of our first short term objective: time to plan.

Ashton
Lowe Ashton

*Please note
your particular
report.
Thank you.*

SAVE HEBER CREEPER COMMITTEE

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR MEETING MONDAY, SEPT. 21, HUB CAFE, 12:00 noon.

1. Rehash of Thursday Meeting with Road Commission
2. Procedure of next meeting with Road Commission
 - A. Meeting Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1 P.M. Room 611 State office Bldg.
 - B. Attendance
 - C. Transportation responsibility
 - D. Discussion of next Move, ie, if then turn us down, what next, if they give us a time extension then what????
 - E. For your information, both Senator Clyde and Rep. Dennis will be there. this is a most valuable asset.
2. Discussion of contacts made since Thursday.
 - A. Unipress-Unidine International---Dr. Green, Lowe
 - B. California Contacts---Leon
 - C. Talk with Bill Bruin
 - D. Jack Sweeney-Royal Street Development
3. Insurance feasibility: Gordon--Russ
4. Other business

WASATCH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SAVE THE HEBER CREEPER COMMITTEE

Organization:

Chairman: Lowe Ashton

Secretary: Byron Cheever

Financial Chairman: Gordon Mendenhall

Publicity Chairman: Duane Price

X Train Control Chairman: Dr. Raymond Green

Members in addition to above: Pres. Harold Call, Chamber Pres. Leon Ritchie, James Smedley, Howard Eggleston, Commissioner Russell Wall, Mayor Harry McMillian.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Finance Committee: Gordon Mendenhall, Byron Cheever, James Smedley, Harold Call.

Publicity Committee: Duane Price, Howard Eggleston, Raymond Green

Train Committee: Raymond Green, Duane Price.

Recommendations and assignments to Committee by Lowe Ashton, Chairman:

Finance Committee: To explore methods of financing the creation of the scenic railroad, including examination of other existing railroads, operating under simular circumstances, and recommend to the various organizations involved the method of finance best suited to the particular circumstances surrounding this endeavor.

Publicity Committee: To create an organized method of controlling the creation of public support for this project under the below suggested items:
A. Statewide media: Newspaper, T.V. etc: Contact personages already expressing interest such as Jan Padfield, Deseret News, Phone No. 277-3259, 5515 Indian Rock Rd. Salt Lake City, and Mrs. Connie Hansen, Provo Herald, 654-2099 Heber City, and simular people for the other state and local media, and arrange for an orderly and non conflicting series of progress reports and news breaks.

B. Create interest on a statewide and local basis by inviting various influence groups and citizens to participate and perhaps take a tour over our proposed route.

C. Special Interest Groups to contact and person assigned:

Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce: Max Rich:

Lowe

Provo Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Green

Uvida-Provo

Dr. Green

State Tourist and Publicity Comm.-Lee Jorgenson

Lowe

State Park-Div. Natural Resources: Gordon Harm.

Lowe

Hiway 40 Assoc

Leon Ritchie

Hiway 189 Assoc.

Leon Ritchie

Four Corners Assoc.

Gordon Mendenhall, Duane Price

Roosevelt Civic Groups

Howard Eggleston

Duchesne " "

Howard "

Vernal " "

Lowe

Park City " "

?

Kamas " "

?

Royal Street Development Corp:	Duane Price, Lowe
B. Y. U.	Pres. Harold Call,
U. of U.	Duane Price
State Advertising Agencies	Ed McLaughlin
Redford-Sundance Group: (Stan Collins)	Dr. Green
Senator Bennett	?
Senator Moss	?
Representative Burton	?
Representative Lloyd	?
PRO UTAH	Gordon M. & Lowe
Golden Spike Empire	Ed McLaughlin

Special Problems:

1. Insurance: Assignment: Gordon Mendenhall, Russ Wall, Harry McMillian
2. Temporary Operating Funds: Finance Committee

SAVE THE HEBER CREEPER COMMITTEE:

~~COMMITTEE REPORT~~

- White as*
1. That this committee, in a preliminary study of the feasibility of establishing a scenic railroad in Heber Valley between Heber City and Deer Creek Reservoir or Wildewood Provo Canyon, contends that there are sound justifications economically, and that it deserves time to fully study the financial structures of such a venture.
 2. That the proposal to be made to the Utah State Road Commission is based on the use of an existing railroad track and right of way, and has no interference with any highway construction plans now proposed and would in no way interfere with any future plans as long as those plans followed the general direction of existing roads in that canyon.
 3. That if this rail were to be removed in any portion of Provo Canyon before the Wasatch Co. Railroad Foundation were allowed to bring in their steam engines and equipment, the economic feasibility of this railroad would be seriously jeopardised.
 4. That if rail over the proposed scenic portion were removed, we would never have another opportunity to establish such a tourist attraction under such favorable circumstances in the entire State of Utah.
 5. That the unique circumstances of the State of Utah Public Ownership of the right of way now, the bordering of much of the right of way by the Utah State owned Wasatch Mt. State Park, the great interest of both Wasatch County and Heber City in this venture, the availability of a considerable amount of extremely valuable Steam Railroad equipment, owned under the tax free structure of the Wasatch Railroad Foundation and Museum Inc. and the loss to the public of the West's currently most popular Silverton-Durango scenic railroad due to disasterous floods in Southern Colorado, creates an environment so conducive to the success of such a venture that its potential

can't be compared to any other similar venture ever started or contemplated.

6. That the granting of approximately six months to create detailed feasibility studies will not cause the State of Utah any great financial loss as the salvage of the railroad will not deteriorate in that time or in the proposed four year experiment time.

7. That the Save the Heber Creeper Committee recognizes the fact that the State of Utah and the Highway Dept. must protect its investment and should be compensated for that portion of the railroad right of way ultimately diverted for the use of the scenic railroad, but that this public effort to establish a valuable tourist attraction should not be penalized by any effort by the Highway Dept. to make a profit on this transaction unless the entire portion used would be purchased by private enterprise.

8. That this committee contacts with various successful Scenic Railroads operating under similar circumstances, in similar areas, with greater obstacles, show they have created very profitable structures out of considerably more hostile environments, and that the various groups dedicated to the improvement of Wasatch County economic picture specifically and the economy of the State of Utah in general are entitled to an opportunity and to at least try, and should be encouraged in this effort by the Utah State Road Commission and the citizens of this State.

9. That, as citizens of the State of Utah, and Businessmen dedicated to the Profit Motive, This committee pledges to the Governor and the State will not develop any proposal requiring the expenditure of State Funds, nor pursue any plan that would not, in the eyes of the committee, make an adequate railroad with private funds.

Chairman
Wasatch Chamber of Commerce

President
Wasatch Railroad Foundation and Museum

Wasatch County Commissioner

Mayor of Heber City

John
W. Ashton

OIL & TRANSPORTATION CO.

Sept. 21, 1970

P. O. Box 67 • HEBER CITY, UTAH 84032

Mr. John L. Sullivan
539½ Avalon Drive,
Murray, Utah 84107

Tel'd
262-2098
9-21-70

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

Boy, do I wish we could enthuse about 50 more like you, we would have that train running in a week. Seriously I do appreciate your thoughts and have taken the liberty of turning your letter over to members of our committee who can best take advantage of your comments. I am particularly impressed with some of your promotion ideas.

Mr. Duane Price, our committeeman on publicity, whose daily job is our Utah State Employment Security Officer in Heber City, will have a copy, as well as Dr. Raymond Green, our committeeman in charge of the train. If and when you wish a ride on our existing vehicle, please contact him.

Mr. Prices office phone is 654-0360, home phone 654-1246

Dr. Greens Office phone is 654-1822, home phone 654-1645.

Either one of these men would be most anxious to help you and your friends take a tour of our proposed railroad excursion.

Also, appreciated your comments about your contact with our governor. I did notice that you said you were sending a copy of the letter, but that I received the original, which I assumed is a mistake, so I am taking the liberty of making a copy of it myself for our files and returning the original to you.

Very truly yours,

"Save the Heber Creeper Committee" (and I still hate that name)

John W. Ashton
Lowe Ashton